

Claims

We claim:

1. A system for extracting advertising or other promotional segments from a video signal comprising:
 - a. means to convert, if necessary, the video signal to a digital format,
 - b. means for storing said video signal in a database,
 - c. means for scanning said video signal for the presence of predetermined characteristics,
 - d. means to associate said characteristics with the start and the end of each such segments.
2. A system as described in claim 1, further comprising means for storing said video signal after said segments have been removed therefrom.
3. A system as described in claim 1 further comprising means for storing said segments without the rest of said video signal.
4. A system as described in claim1 further comprising means for separately storing said segments and the rest of said video signal.
5. A system as described in claim 1 wherein said predetermined characteristics include the presence of a black frame before and after said segment.

6. A system as described in claim 1 wherein said predetermined characteristics include the presence of a predetermined video internal time code cue.

7. A system as described in claim 1 wherein said predetermined characteristics include the presence of a higher average audio level.

8. A system as described in claim 7 wherein said audio level is at least 3% higher than that of the immediately preceding portion of the video signal.

9. A system as described in claim 8, wherein the increase in the audio level is between 3% and 6% of that of the immediately preceding portion of the video signal.

10. A system as described in claim 1, wherein said predetermined characteristics include a predetermined duration for such segments.

11. A system as described in claim 10, wherein said duration is 15 seconds or a multiple thereof.

12. A system as described in claim 1 further comprising means to store said segments in a database.

13. A system as described in claim 12 further comprising means to store predetermined information relating to said segments in a database.

14. A system as described in claim 13 wherein said information includes the source, the start time and date, the end time and date, a summary of the content of the segment.

15. A system as described in claim 12 further comprising means to store frames extracted from each said segment at predetermined time intervals.

16. A system as described in claim 15 further comprising means to store predetermined information relating to said segments in a database.

17. A system as described in claim 16 wherein said information includes the source, the start time and date, the end time and date, a summary of the content of the segment.

18. A method for tracking and retrieving advertising segments from a television signal comprising the steps of:

- a. converting, if necessary, the television signal to a digital format,
- b. storing said digital television signal in a database,
- c. scanning the television signal for the presence of predetermined characteristics,
- d. identifying the start and end of such advertising segments with the use of such characteristics.

19. A method as described in claim 18 further comprising the following steps:

- a. storing said segments in a database,
- b. storing said characteristics in a database,

